



Welcome to our November Newsletter. We hope you all had a restful and enjoyable half term break! We're ready for what promises to be an action-packed and festive few weeks leading up to the Christmas holidays. Please catch up on everything the children got up to before the break by reading the class information below.

It's going to be a brilliant run-up to the end of the year, packed with fun events and opportunities for the children. Here's a sneak peek at some of the exciting things on the calendar:

- Cluster Sports
- Dance Workshop
- Clay Workshop
- Our annual Open Day, showcasing the school for our new intake in September 2026
- Our fantastic Christmas shop, 'Elfridges'
- The ever-popular Christmas dinner
- Our annual trip to the pantomime (Panto)!

We're looking forward to sharing these memorable moments with your children!

Mrs Aoife Greaves

Important Notice Regarding Payments for School Activities

To ensure that we can continue offering enriching activities and trips that enhance our school's curriculum, we kindly ask for your prompt attention to all requested payments. These planned experiences are invaluable to our students' learning and development, but as they are organised to supplement and enhance the curriculum, we rely on parental contributions to cover their costs alongside contributions from the HSA.

Unfortunately, if a significant number of payments are not made by the specified deadlines, the school may not be able to cover the resulting financial shortfall. In such cases, we may be forced to cancel the planned activity to avoid placing an unmanageable burden on school funds.

Please ensure all activity payments are made on time so these wonderful opportunities can go ahead for all students. If you anticipate any difficulty in

meeting a payment deadline, please speak confidentially with Mrs. Greaves as soon as possible.

Open Morning and Evening

This year in Willow Class we are full. It is great to see the children working and learning together. We would like to continue this trend into the next academic year. We would like to extend an invitation to our Open Morning and Evening to those of you who have a child who is ready to start school and to your friends who have children who are ready to start school in September 2026.

Our Open morning and Evening will take place on Tuesday 11th November 9-10.30 and 6pm. Please call the school office to book a space.

Nursery Two Intake - Reminder

Last year, we made the decision, in conjunction with staff and governors, that we will no longer take children into our Reception Class in the spring and summer terms. There will be one point of intake in September.

Key Collection Information

Please make a note of this important date: we have an **early close** on **Friday, December 19th**. All children must be collected at **1:00 PM** on this day.

Santa Challenge

Dear Parent/Carer,

It's that time of year again, and we're thrilled to invite you and your child to take part in the **Santa Challenge**!



What is the Santa Challenge?

The Santa Challenge is a **virtual race** where every active travel journey your child makes—such as walking, cycling, or scooting to school—counts as a step closer to Santa in Lapland. The more active journeys you complete, the closer we get to reaching Santa's home!

This fun and festive challenge encourages healthy habits, reduces car journeys, and helps us all stay active during the winter season and at the end of it one of our lucky students will win a prize scooter from Santa.

When does it start?

The challenge will run from **Monday 24th November to Friday 4th December 2025.**

Why are we doing this?

Central Bedfordshire Council promotes active travel—such as walking, parking and striding, scooting, and cycling to school—because it brings many benefits:

- **Health and Wellbeing:** Today's children spend less time outdoors, and this challenge helps them stay active and healthy.
- **Family Engagement:** It's an activity that parents and carers can enjoy alongside their children.
- **Academic Benefits:** Research shows that active travel can improve concentration and academic performance at school.

Thank you for supporting active travel and helping make this challenge a success. If you have any questions, please contact me,

Siobhan McSwiggan

Active Travel Officer – Schools

Place and Communities Directorate

Email: siobhan.mcswiggan@centralbedfordshire.gov.uk

Two Thank you emails from Leighton Linslade Helpers

Please see the email we received following our successful collection. Thank you all for your kind donations.



Dear Aoife

I am writing to thank you, and the staff and pupils for collecting food items for your Harvest and donating them to The Leighton Linslade Helpers.

The food we received is so much appreciated, as amongst other services, we operate primarily as a food bank. Chris commented on how much she enjoyed her visit yesterday.

The contribution of food from your school will certainly ensure that we spend less on our next food shop and the items will go in food parcels to deserving families.

Thank you again.

Kind regards,

Gill

School Liaison Officer

Hello,

My name is Rosie and I coordinate the Leighton Linlade Homeless Service Foodbank. We are extremely grateful for the donation of food provided by your families as part of the school's Harvest Festival. We are leading up to the busiest of times for the foodbank with Christmas approaching. The food has been sorted and is ready to be included in food parcels. Our food parcels include, for Christmas, extra festive food along with a good supply of non-perishable food including meal packs. The food donated will go toward making meal packs which allow for families to share a meal. For others, we provide bespoke food parcels for people who are without cooking facilities - rough sleepers and sofa-surfers.

Whilst I appreciate that those who donated will never meet those who will be helped, I can say with certainty, there will be many very grateful families and individuals.

I hope that you can pass on our thanks to all who donated and to staff who have helped to organise the whole thing. I know it takes a lot of work (ex-teacher)!

Best wishes,

Rosie George

Rosie George BEM

Leighton Linlade Homeless Service and Community Food Bank

Celebrating Attendance

During a recent discussion with our Local Authority Attendance Officer, Hockliffe Lower School was complimented on our attendance which currently sits at 96.2%.

Please help us to maintain this high percentage, every day missed from school is missed learning time.



Autumn Questionnaire

Please click on [this link](#) to complete our Autumn Questionnaire. Results will be discussed in the December Governor's Meeting and shared via the newsletter. Deadline 30th November.

REMINDER

First Aid Incident and Medication Administration Notifications

We have moved to a new digital system called Medical Tracker to inform parents about first aid incidents and medication administration at school. This replaces paper notifications, helping reduce costs, save time, and support the environment.

Medical Tracker allows us to record and track first aid and medication events involving your child and automatically notify you by email soon after they occur.

Please note that the school office will be unable to answer telephone queries about these notifications. If staff feel your child needs to be collected or further action is required, we will contact you directly. Otherwise, the email is simply to inform you of the incident, just as paper slips did previously.

Emails will come from donotreply@medicaltracker.co.uk — please add this address to your safe sender list to ensure you receive updates.

A Quick Note on Birthday Celebrations

Thank you to all the parents who send in treats for their child's birthday! We love being able to share in their special day and appreciate the thoughtful gesture. There is no expectation that anything should be sent in, this is a personal parental choice.

To help us manage time and ensure the safety of all our students, we kindly ask that you keep any birthday treats simple and pre-packaged. Individual, wrapped items like a pack of sweets, a small biscuit/cookie pack, or a juice box work best.

When choosing a treat, please also be mindful of our students' dietary requirements. It's essential that the treats are:

- Nut-Free (this is mandatory for our school)
- Gluten-Free
- Halal (if possible, or a suitable vegetarian/vegan option)

Being aware of these needs helps us make sure every child can safely participate in the celebration.

Thank you again for your cooperation and understanding!

School Meals on Panto Day - 16th December

Reminder - only sandwich options will be available for school meals on Tuesday 16th December as the children will not be back in school until around 1pm that day..

Christmas Gifts

All of the staff at Hockliffe are always grateful for the gifts they receive. As a team our main focus is your children and their learning, wellbeing & happiness. We are very aware of the current financial burden on families so please don't feel obligated to buy gifts for staff for Christmas. If you would like to show your appreciation we would ask that rather than buying gifts for individuals that you would consider purchasing something from our Amazon Wish List. This would make us happy and give us joy. Our Amazon Wish List can be found [here](#).

Christmas Jumpers

If you are having a clear out and have any spare but in good condition Christmas Jumpers for children, please drop them into the office or give them to Mrs Greaves so we can make sure everyone has a jumper for Christmas Dinner Day.

Fulbrook Focused

Please find a copy of the latest Fulbrook Focused newsletter [here](#).

HSA Elfridges & Christmas Raffle

Elfridges is the school Christmas gift shop where children can purchase some gifts for family and friends.

Elfridges will be open on the 4th of December.

Please return completed forms (which have already been sent home via Book Bags) and make payment no later than 24th November if you wish for your child to partake. All forms need to be returned and put into the box on the playground by Monday 24th November.



A copy of the Elfridges form can be found [here](#).

Gifts are charged at £2.50 each. Please send money via bank transfer to our account. Details are as follows:-

Account Name	Hockliffe School Association
Account number	72738481
Sort Code	403333
Reference	Elf plus pupil name

Christmas Raffle

12th December at Carols on the Playground

Raffle £5 for 3 tickets or £10 for 6 Please send money via bank transfer to our account. Details are as follows:-

Account Name	Hockliffe School Association
Account number	72738481
Sort Code	403333
Reference	Raf plus pupil name

Donations for the Christmas Raffle

The HSA would be very grateful for any donations for this year's Christmas Raffle. Please give donations to one of the committee members or drop them into reception. Please send donations by 10th December. If you know any local or not so local business owners please ask them if they would be willing to donate a prize for the raffle.

Thank you

HSA Committee

HSA Annual Contribution Request

To make participation easier and to ensure consistent fundraising, the HSA is endeavouring to make things simpler, to help with this we are requesting a one-off payment to cover the cost and entry for the majority of the year's events.

This contribution would cover your child's participation in the following events throughout the academic year:

1. Three non-uniform days
2. The Spooky Dance
3. Two cake sales
4. Donut sale
5. Ice lolly sale
6. Crazy hair day
7. The World Book Day Competition

We are requesting a one-off payment for £20 for this. There will be other events throughout the year that will require payment. Money cannot be refunded for nonattendance. This means your child won't need to bring in small amounts of cash for each of these individual activities. There are other activities that the HSA supports throughout the school year, including Valentine's Day and Easter treats and subsidising school trips.

How to Pay

Please pay the £20 per child contribution into the HSA bank account by Friday 28th November 2025, if you have not already done so. Crucially, when making the payment, please use your child's full name as the payment reference. This is essential for the Treasurer, Rachel, to accurately track the contributions for each child. Thank you in advance for your incredible support. Your contributions directly fund activities and resources that benefit every single student at Hockliffe School. We look forward to a successful and fun year of fundraising.

If you have any queries or would like to volunteer, please email the HSA email address: thehsa@hockliffelowerschool.co.uk

The Hockliffe School Association Committee

Breast Cancer Awareness Month

October was Breast Cancer Awareness Month. Please see the link for further information on recognising the signs and symptoms of breast cancer. The NHS also has information on other illnesses and types of cancer.

<https://www.england.nhs.uk/south/wp-content/uploads/sites/6/2017/03/Easy-read-breast-cancer-leaflet.pdf>

Rowan

What a fantastic start to the school year it has been! Since September, the children have been working incredibly hard and have already achieved so much.

In English, the children have been making brilliant progress through our I Am a Clever Writer scheme. Their writing skills are really shining, and they have produced some wonderful Star Writes! We particularly enjoyed exploring the story of Beowulf, which inspired lots of creative and descriptive work.

In Maths, we have been learning all about place value, addition, and subtraction. The children have also been regularly practising their times tables and had great fun dressing up for Times Tables Rockstars Day — what a lively and enthusiastic bunch they were!

Our Science lessons have been full of excitement as we explored different materials. The children especially enjoyed creating their own water cycles and watching the Mentos and cola explosion experiment in action!

In History, we travelled back in time to the Anglo-Saxon era. The class made impressive Anglo-Saxon headstones using the runic alphabet and even designed their own Anglo-Saxon village.

In Art, the children got creative with printing techniques, producing some wonderful pieces.

We also celebrated Spanish Day, where everyone had a go at learning new words and phrases before writing their very own postcards in Spanish — ¡qué fantástico!

The children also took part in a very meaningful mental well-being session, where they learned a range of techniques and strategies to help regulate their emotions — something we will continue to practise throughout the year.

In Music, Rowan Class have been learning to play the Glockenspiel and can now perform parts of the song “Sparkle in the Sun”. They have also been thoughtful in RE, learning about the Harvest Festival and how it is celebrated around the world, before writing some lovely poems inspired by the theme of harvest.

To finish off a busy and brilliant half term, the children had an absolute ball at the Halloween disco! It was wonderful to see everyone dressed up and having so much fun together.

We are so proud of how much the children have achieved already this year — their enthusiasm, curiosity, and kindness shine through in everything they do.

Maple Class

Investigating Line

This half term in art we have been exploring line through the artists Rembrandt, Miro and Klee. We were inspired by Miro's constellation artworks to make collaborative pieces of art together. We used the same shapes, lines and colours Miro used in his art.



Shell Art



We also explored texture and different art mediums when making pictures of some amazing shells. We used different mediums including pencil, chalk, ripped paper collage and water colour paint. We looked carefully at the shape, patterns and colour of each shell.

Some of us made pictures of four different shells and some of us did the same shell but in four different ways.





Investigating Materials in

Science



In science we explored different materials usually found at the seaside including wood, plastic, metal, rock and paper. We began by sorting seaside objects by their main material.

Then we started learning about the properties of different materials. We made close observations of different stones and compared their properties, for example if they were smooth or bumpy and sharp or blunt.



We also investigated how effective different materials are for construction. We built small bench models to support some metal figures. We used card, wood and plastic blocks to see which material was the best at supporting the weight. We found that cardboard was not very good for building strong structures because it is flexible, but rigid materials like wood and plastic blocks were much better.





Clay Workshop



Mrs Houghton visited us for a clay workshop. She is a clay artist and taught us how to make a 3D clay snowman. We started with a potato shape for the body and added a brussel sprout sized shape for the head. Then we decorated the face and added a scarf and buttons. For the choice of small twigs or matchsticks. It was great fun!



arm we had the

Orienteering

We have been using our new orienteering resources to complete some scavenger hunt quizzes. We have completed quizzes about Guy Fawkes, writing sentences and Remembrance Day. It is really fun looking for the clues hidden around the school grounds!



Willow Class

In Willow Class this half term we have been learning about our school rules and how we can all get along together. We have settled into the rhythm of the school day and have been working hard on our learning.

We have been learning about each other's families and finding out about what is the same and what is different about us all. We have been beginning to think about our feelings and how important our special people are to us. We have thought about our homes, what they have in common and what is different.

We read *Owl Babies* by Martin Waddell and talked about how the baby owls felt at different times in the story. We learned some printing techniques using sponges and corks to print pictures of the baby owls.



We have been thinking about growing and harvesting food. We used a machine that peeled, cored and sliced the apple when we turned the handle.



We did a
to find Willow



survey
Class'

favourite variety of apple. It was Braeburn!

In Music we are looking and “chants”, we have learned one about an ant, monkey and elephant, and also “We’re going on a bear hunt” We have learned names of lots of instruments and have used them to accompany our songs.

In PE we have been learning to move safely around the Hall and how to find a space away from anyone else and any equipment. We are learning to move in different ways with control and coordination. We will move on to learning to use balls and other PE equipment with control.

In RE we have talked about how we are all different and special, and who makes us feel special. We have also learned about how the festival of Diwali is celebrated. After half term we will learn about the festivals of Christmas and Hanukkah.

Guru Nanak Dev Ji GURPURAB

Wed, 5 Nov 2025

Guru Nanak Dev Ji GURPURAB, also known as Guru Nanak's Prakash Utsav and Guru Nanak Dev Ji Jayanti, celebrates the birth of the first Sikh guru, Guru Nanak. It is celebrated in the month of November, but the date varies from year to year according to the lunar Indian calendar. Guru Nanak GURPURAB or Guru Nanak Jayanti is celebrated as the day to remember the holy guru, Guru Nanak, and is a reminder for the followers of Sikhism to remember his teachings and overcome the five vices - lust, greed, attachment, anger and pride and devote one's life in the selfless service of God.

The day before Guru Nanak's birthday usually commences with a procession with teams of singers singing hymns, brass bands playing different tunes, 'Gatka'

(martial art) teams show their swordsmanship, and processionists singing the chorus. The procession passes through the main roads and streets of the town which are covered with buntings and decorated gates and the leaders inform the people of the message of Guru Nanak. The day of the birthday commences very early in the morning with singing of hymns from Sikh scripture and followed by lectures and recitations of poems praising Guru Nanak. In the afternoon, Langar or special community lunch is prepared and people eat these together with family members and friends. The main objective of this lunch is to offer food as a form of seva (service) and bhakti (devotion) Happy Guru Nanak Jayanti!



Bedfordshire Police is taking firm action against the illegal use of e-scooters and other e-vehicles in public places.

THINK BEFORE YOU BUY

These vehicles are not road legal unless part of an approved rental scheme - **there is currently no such scheme active in Bedfordshire.**

Privately owned e-scooters and e-bikes cannot be insured, making their use in public spaces illegal.

If you are caught riding an e-scooter, e-bike or any other offroad vehicle in a public road or any other public space, **your vehicle may be seized and destroyed.**

FOR MORE INFORMATION, OR TO REPORT NUISANCE VEHICLES, VISIT OUR WEBSITE:

WWW.BEDS.POLICE.UK



Communication from Beds Police - Promotion of Immobilise and Report My Loss websites

Bedfordshire Police have asked us to share the following information to help protect students personal belongings and improve the chances of recovering lost or stolen items:

Register Your Child's Mobile Phone – Immobilise

This free service helps police identify and return lost or stolen phones and other valuables. By registering your child's device, you're helping protect their property and increasing the chances of recovery if it goes missing. The website also offers helpful advice on keeping devices safe and secure.

It only takes a few minutes to register, and it's completely free—please take a moment to do this and help keep your child's phone safe.

www.immobilise.com/help/registermobilephone

Lost Property – Report My Loss

This free service allows you to register lost items, which can then be accessed by police and other agencies to help recover them. You'll also receive a reference number that can be used for insurance claims or replacement processes.

www.reportmyloss.com/uk.

Calendar

Month & school events	
Forest School Willow Weekly on a Wednesday in the autumn term end date Wednesday 19h November Maple & Rowan will have Forest school in the summer term. Which half of the term will be confirmed in the spring term. Children will be required to wear their Forest School clothes into school each week for the 6 week block. Please send a change of clothes on wet days.	
November 11 th Open Morning & Open Evening for prospective parents starting school Sept 26	5 th Guru Nanak Dev Ji Gurburab 9 th – 16 th Inter Faith Week 10 th – 14 th Anti-Bullying Week 11 th Remembrance Day

<p>13th – Willow Class Parental Consultations 24th – 6th Dec Santa Challenge A two-week virtual race to Lapland where pupils’ active travel journeys count as miles within the race to Santa, recorded by school.</p>	<p>13th kindness Day Uk 16th International Day of Tolerance 16th 22nd Road Safety Week 24th – 30th UK Parliament Week</p>
<p>December 3rd Flu immunisations catch up 10.00 pupils only 4th Elfridges (during school day price to be confirmed) 12th Rocksteady Concert 2.30 TBC 12th Carols on the playground 3.15 – 3.30 TBC 12th HSA Christmas Raffle 3.15 TBC 16th Panto (all children) 9.00 – 1.00 17th Christmas Dinner for pupils - children can wear a Christmas jumper or party outfit or school uniform. 18th Willow Christmas Production 2.30 – 3.00 19th Last day of term Early Close 1pm</p>	<p>3rd International Day of People with Disabilities 10th Human Rights Day 18th International Migrants Day 14th - 22nd Hannukah 25th Christmas</p>
<p>January 6th Return to school 8th Reading Afternoon 2.30 – 3.10 (parents or grandparents) 16th Dance workshop all children Chinese Dance (during the school day no cost)</p>	<p>4th World Braille Day 14th Pongal and Makar Sankranti 18th World Religion Day 20th Martin Luther King Day 27th Holocaust Memorial Day</p>
<p>February 2nd Rowan and Maple Parents Evening 1.30 – 5.30 5th Willow Parents Evening 2.30 – 5.30 9th - 15th Wear Bright Shine Bright CHUMS Children’s Mental Health Week 10th Safer Internet Day 11th February Maple Performance parents / grandparents invited 2.30 – 3.00 13th HSA Valentines non-uniform - Wear Bright Shine Bright 13th Break up for half term 23rd SEND parent meetings week 24th Young Leaders Training Yr 4 am PE kit 24th Little BASH Maple lunchtime PE kit</p>	<p>LGBT+ History Month 9th – 15th Children’s Mental health Week 10th Safer Internet Day 14th – 20th Random Acts of Kindness Week 17th Chinese New Year 17th Feb – 18th March expected dates for Ramadan 21st International Mother Language Day</p>

<p>March 3rd Young Leaders Training Yr 4 am PE kit 3rd Little BASH Maple lunchtime PE kit 10th Young Leaders Training Yr 4 am PE kit 10th Little BASH Maple lunchtime PE kit 12th HSA Carer's Event afternoon times TBC 20th Yr3/4 Joy of Movement Festival during school day 20th Rocksteady Concert 2.30 TBC 27th Last day of term Early Close 1pm</p>	<p>2nd – 3rd March Purim 3rd World Wildlife Day 4th Holi 8th international Women's Day 13th Young Carers Action Day 16th – 22nd Sign Language Week 19th – 20th Eid al-Fitr 21st International Day for Elimination of Racial Discrimination</p>
<p>April 17th Dance workshop all children USA street dance (during the school day no cost) 22nd Cluster Sports KS Brooklands approx. 4.30 pick up</p>	<p>Stress Awareness Month 1st – 9th Passover 2nd World Autism Awareness Day 5th Easter 7th World Health Day 14th Vaisakhi 14th Sikh New Year 14th Bengali New Year 15th World Art day</p>
<p>May 14th Enterprise Day children only £1 needed in change e.g. 10 x 10p or 6 x 10p + 2 x 20p (avoid £1 coin) Each class will devise some games / activities. The children will have the opportunity to try each other's game / activity. Within the school day. 22nd HSA Non Uniform 22nd Break up for half term</p>	<p>1st Vesak 4th – 10th Deaf Awareness Week 9th Fair trade Day 11th – 17th Mental Health Awareness Day 15th international day of Families 18th – 22nd – Walk to School Week 21st World Day for Cultural Diversity</p>
<p>June 1st SEND parent meetings week 8th Sports Day parents / grandparents invited from 1.30 – 3.00 9th Girls Active Rowan PE kit am 9th Boys 2 Move Rowan PE kit am 10th Cluster Sports KS1 (Brooklands) approx. 4.30 pick up TBC 16th Girls Active Rowan PE kit am 16th Boys 2 Move Rowan PE kit am 18th HSA Carer's Event (time to be confirmed) 23rd Girls Active Rowan PE kit am 23rd Boys 2 Move Rowan PE kit am</p>	<p>Pride Month 5th World Environment day 14th – 20th World Refugee Week 21st World music Day</p>

30 th Girls Active Rowan PE kit am 30 th Boys 2 Move Rowan PE kit am	
July 1 st Year 4 Transfer Day (TBC) 2 nd Year 4 Transfer Day (TBC) 2 nd Internal Move Up Day 7 th Girls Active Rowan PE kit am 7 th Boys 2 Move Rowan PE kit am 9 th Parent teacher report meeting (only if required to discuss report) 3.15 – 5 10 th Rowan Activity Day during the school day 15 th Rowan End of year graduation celebration for yr 4 parents all Rowan invited 2.30 – 3.10 (subject to change) 16 th HSA Disco 2.15 – 4.00 all children invited, price to be confirmed. Children can bring in clothes to change into at lunchtime. 17 th Last day of term Early Close 1pm	30 th international Day of Friendship
September 2026	

HSA

Bank Details

Account Name: Hockliffe School Association		
Account number: 72738481		
Sort Code: 40 33 33		
Reference:	PUPIL	NAME
Note: please do not pay for events until asked to do so by the HSA		

The 2025/2026 calendar of events

EVENT	DATE	COST
Crazy hair day	Friday 14 th November	Included in annual fee

Elfridges	Thursday 4 th December (during the school day)	Cost to participate – details to follow closer to the time
HSA Christmas Raffle	Friday 12 th December (tickets pulled after the Carols in the Playground)	£5 per strip
HSA Valentines non-uniform -Wear Bright Shine Bright	Friday 13 th February	Included in annual fee
World Book Day competition <i>(More details to follow)</i>	Friday 6 th March	Included in annual fee
HSA Carer's Event	Thursday 12 th March 2.00 and 2.30	£5 per child (one adult – mum, dad, aunt, uncle, gran, grandad per child)
HSA non-uniform day	Friday 22 nd May	Included in annual fee
HSA Carer's Event	Thursday 18 th June 8.30-9.00am	£5 per child (one adult – mum, dad, aunt, uncle, gran, grandad per child)
HSA End of year Disco	Thursday 16 th July 2.15 – 4.00pm	£5 per child Children to bring clothes to change into at school
Cake sale, donut sale, ice lolly sale	Dates to be confirmed	Included in annual fee